

Dropout prevention/stay in school/increasing completion rates

- 1) Follow up every withdrawal in 3 weeks if no WRITTEN record of exactly where the student went is received. This is for current students leaving during the school year. Have good contact numbers and address to follow up.
- 2) For previously withdrawn students follow up on all paperwork. Do NOT accept “lost”, “dropped out”, “don’t know” as codes or answers for what happened to a student. Make home visits, call phone numbers, and check old emergency cards for other family member numbers to find a student. Check database to see if a student had younger siblings also enrolled in your ISD. Elementary kids always give real and working numbers!! If a student came from another ISD, or especially out of state, find out where and re-contact that ISD to see if student returned to that ISD.
- 3) Plato lab credit recovery program – We use this for current students to catch up on credits, for those who dropped out and came back to help regain credits, for students who left for maternity leave, or dropped out due to pregnancy to catch up. Have at least a 2 day after school Plato lab to help with additional time to get caught up.
- 4) TAKS retesters can easily be recovered with a good solid plan. Send out a letter announcing dates/times/location for tutorials for these students. Follow up the letter with a call in one week. Then make a home visit with a form to sign up and come back for tutorials and information about taking the test. Get good phone numbers from the family during the visit, and 2 other family or friends numbers as well. Emphasize how much you want the student to succeed, and how confident you are the student can do this. No matter what – no one should not give up.
- 5) Verify all data. Sometimes a student is counted twice, or the student was listed under a student ID# at one point then a social security number at another, thus causing one person to be listed as a dropout or non-completer twice. Are all codes correct? Did someone follow up to make sure the student really dropped out? Some students start that way, but then go to Adult Education, Community College, private schools, or charter schools without letting their previous school know. Check, check, and re-check where the student is.
- 6) Conduct meetings weekly with your school attendance clerk(s). Have a “hit list” of students falling behind on attendance. Report back weekly. Have the “stay in school person” deal with current year attendance issues, and assign an “Academic Coach” to students already identified as at risk or those with previous attendance issues. The “Academic Coach” MUST make home visits regularly. The “stay in school person” sends court letters, warning letters, and makes some home visits.
- 7) Hold students and parents accountable for absences, where they go when they withdrawal, etc. Emphasize you are trying to best help their child succeed, and if they are not at school they cannot pass. You and your school are VERY serious about ensuring all students get a top flight education, which demands a student be in attendance. This makes it hard for a parent to argue about not having their child at school.